British Columbia
Ministry of Transportation
Staff Newsletter

Road Runner

Winter 2004

A note from the editor

Many thanks to everyone who submitted such a great variety of articles for this winter issue of Road Runner.

I hope you're finding that the Road Runner is becoming a more people focused newsletter. As a ministry, we have much to be proud of in the people we work with and the services we provide.

If events or accomplishments in your corner of the province aren't mentioned in the newsletter, please take the lead in making sure they're included in the next issue. I'm happy to work on the writing with you.

If you have any comments on how to improve the Road Runner, please contact me.

Cindi Trowbridge

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"Pearls come from irritation. Where you feel the most stretch, pain or irritation may just be your area of biggest payback. Highly successful leaders are willing to push themselves to do what most other people won't do."

Jim Clemmer

John Newhouse and wife Carol chart a new course now that John has retired from the Ministry of Transportation.

Bon voyage, John Newhouse!

After 34 1/2 years with the Ministry of Transportation, family, friends and co-workers gathered at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club on Sept. 26, 2003 to wish John Newhouse and his wife Carol bon voyage as they embark into retirement. That afternoon several folks joined John and Carol in an afternoon of sailing.

John started working for the ministry on May 1, 1969 in construction. By 1975 there had been various promotions to Engineering Assistant on several construction crews.

From 1975 to 1981 and again from 1986 to 1988, through promotions to Technician 1 and 2, John was involved with the ministry's Maintenance Management System. This was followed by a short stint as Regional Operations Technician.

In 1989, John was promoted to District Highways Manager in Terrace and held this position until 1994. From 1994 to 2002 he was the Manager of Maintenance Programs in Victoria. In 2002 and 2003, John had taken on the Project Director duties for negotiating the new 10-year road and bridge maintenance contracts.

He played a significant role in the success of the privatization of road and bridge maintenance for the Ministry of Transportation. John successfully managed some very difficult responsibilities with diplomacy and came to be known as the "peacemaker."

On Feb. 4, 2003, John received the Queen's Jubilee Commemorative gold medal for his contributions to British Columbia. Perhaps the best summation of John's qualities for being a caring, thoughtful, sensitive and unassuming public servant are his actions during a closure of Highway 16 due to avalanche hazards while he was a district highways manager.

After Highway 16 had been closed for several days, it was announced publicly that it

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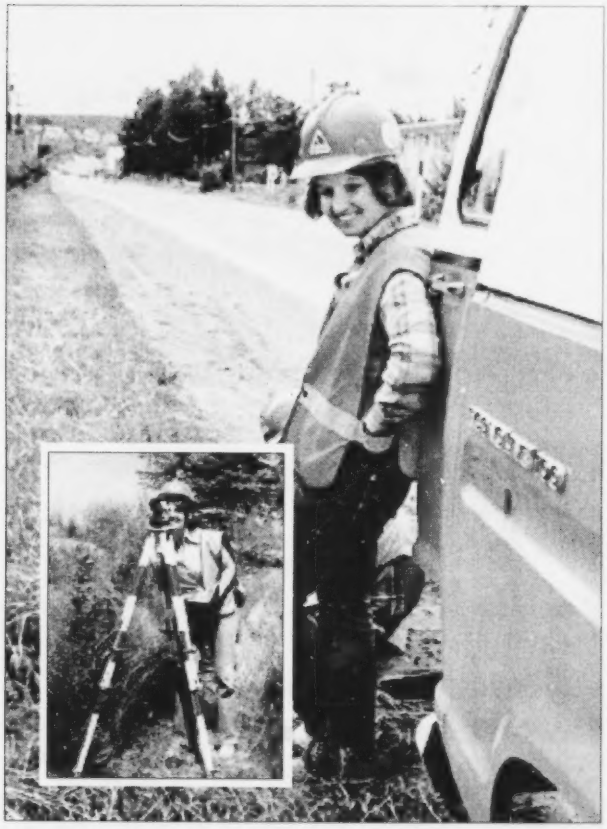

Lorena Green, then 24, surveying for the Nechako River Bridge site plan in Vanderhoof in 1976.

So long, Lorena, until next time

Friday, November 14, 2003 was Lorena Green's last day with the Ministry of Transportation . . . this time.

Lorena first left Victoria and Pollution Control Branch in 1974 to work for Ministry of Transportation Design and Survey in Prince George.

There she worked in the design office for two years and was then transferred to George Kusma and Ted Floren's survey crews as a mobile employee.

In 1977 she won a competition in Victoria and joined Gary Forgaard's design team.

In 1979, Lorena resigned to start a family, daughters Tanya and Chelsea.

From 1980 to 1995 Lorena worked for a number of private sector consultants on highway design projects, and she rejoined the ministry in 1995, taking a role as the Specifications Technician in the Construction and Maintenance Branch.

Due to restructuring in 1996, she became the ministry's claim adjuster.

Lorena is now working as a highway design technician for AMEC in Nanaimo.

A shared service delivery success

It's all about better public service

Submitted by Dan Palesch

There are a lot of hurdles to overcome amidst not only a general office move but a move into a facility in Creston with other ministries with differing views and ways of doing business.

Through open communication and a vision of this as an opportunity to provide better service, we were able to overcome many obstacles, and now we are seeing the result of this hard work.

As of September 2, 2003, we became a one-stop shopping network for four ministries, Agriculture, Food and Fisheries; Public Safety and Solicitor General; Transportation; and Water, Land and Air Protection, making access easier for people and improving the way we deal with cross-jurisdictional issues. It is also very beneficial having the other agencies next door (literally), to discuss issues that we share in common.

As the lone ministry employee in the Creston area, having other people around is proving invaluable, not only for public service, but also as an added social benefit.

Newhouse put others first to get the job done

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would reopen. Vehicles of all description were queued waiting to pass when another avalanche occurred. The snow was cleared away, and to ensure the public's safe passage, John personally piloted all of the hundreds of vehicles through the mountain pass. John's concern was at personal sacrifice because his eyes required medical treatment afterwards.

Now John and Carol will have more time to enjoy sailing and sunsets.

Excellent customer service!

Ministry staff continue to provide excellent customer service, and it doesn't go unnoticed. Cindy Katchmar, District Development Technician (left) and Michelle Schilling, Roads Area Manager in the 100 Mile House sub-office of the Cariboo District received bouquets from a satisfied customer in April 2003.

A concerned property owner approached the 100 Mile staff regarding the status of an old trail through Canim Estates subdivision that many locals said was public. The trail was frequented by individuals on ATV's who littered and disrupted the neighborhood.

Michelle and Cindy researched the subdivision files and registers and could find no mention of the trail being public. According to the property owner, since being advised that the trail is not considered public, the individuals that were the problem are no longer utilizing the trail.

Partnership in landscape beautification

Submitted by Julian Malinsky

In July 2002, the Ministry of Transportation announced that it would no longer provide esthetic mowing and landscape maintenance on its rights of way throughout the province.

The announcement created challenges at several award-winning landscape areas along the Trans-Canada Highway within the city of Kamloops.

The landscape maintenance at interchanges along the TCH between Monte Creek and the west end of Kamloops was approaching an annual cost of $100,000. The Thompson-Nicola District immediately began a dialogue with the City of Kamloops and Argo Road Maintenance (Thompson), exploring thoughts, ideas and possible options that could save six major landscape areas that provide a positive image to travellers driving through the city.

On June 19, Randy Diehl, Chief City Administrator, emceed the media event at Notre Dame and Columbia Street, where he announced the "Adopt a Highway Program" and unveiled two new signs. The signs include the proposed new city sign and the special "Landscape Sponsor Sign" (designed and manufactured by the MoT Sign Shop).

Claude Richmond, MLA, Kamloops West; Mel Rothenburger, Mayor of Kamloops; and Kevin Krueger, MLA, Kamloops East viewing the new sign unveiling.
Picture by Ross McLean, MoT Sign Shop Manager

The event celebrated the successful partnership agreement between the City of Kamloops and the Thompson-Nicola District, which solved a challenging problem.

Argo Road Maintenance was the first to put their name forward as a sponsor for all the landscape in the Aberdeen Interchange.

After several months of discussion and debate, the following is a brief overview of how problems created by the change were successfully addressed:

1. The City of Kamloops assumes all the landscape maintenance activity at six interchanges along the TCH, including all irrigation maintenance, repairs and replacement; water charges; mowing; weeding; fertilizing; pruning; plant removal and replacement; water smart changes; litter pick-up and so forth. The city will manage and administer a sponsorship program, and they will absorb all maintenance costs for areas where sponsors cannot be obtained.

2. The Ministry of Transportation has agreed to enhance the generic Service & Attraction signs by adding specially designed tabs to the proposed signs. The tabs are designed to match and lead to new directional signs planned throughout the city and send a message that it is safe to visit their city.

3. The discussions have brought the city and MoT Properties Branch to the table to help resolve several old outstanding right-of-way issues within the city.

A "win-win-win" for all stakeholders.

A Day in the Life

Earlier this winter, I had the opportunity to spend a very snowy day in the West Kootenay with Bruce Lintott refreshing my memory on a day in the work life of an area manager.

By the end of the day, I couldn't help but notice Bruce's genuine pride in serving the public, his concern for their safety and the sacrifices and memories he's made.

Cindi Trowbridge with Bruce Lintott

Over his more than 25 years with the ministry he, like many fellow employees past and present, has worked in most corners of the province often away from family, friends and familiar things. He talked about memories of working with those who went on to become district managers and directors.

The day started out with a district management meeting to go over accomplishments and plan for work ahead. Another area manager reported a fatal accident the previous day on the lakeshore east of Nelson and his need to visit the site.

While Bruce and I spent the rest of the day driving the highways and side roads between Nelson, Fruitvale, Trail, Rossland and Castlegar concerned for the safety of the travelling public, I was reminded that there is no typical day for area managers. We stopped by the local MLA's office and the RCMP detachment to check on public issues, talked to maintenance contractor staff to see how they were faring in the battle against snow and ice to make the roads as safe as they could and impromptu meetings on the side of the road with concerned public and other ministry staff.

Snow and ice are a challenge that ministry maintenance contractors battle.

Although there were several accidents that day, thankfully none were very serious. We viewed recently completed projects and talked about the planning underway for others.

After more than two years working as an area manager in Fruitvale, Trail and Castlegar, Bruce is happily returning home again to work in the Nakusp area and be with family, friends and things familiar.

Way to go, grads!
Financial Management Certificate Program

On Nov. 20, 2003, 13 employees from nine ministries and organizations were formally recognized for completing the Financial Management Certificate Program (FMCP).

The Honourable Gary Collins, Minister of Finance, presented the grads with their certificates during a ceremony held at the Hotel Grand Pacific in Victoria. Congratulations were also conferred by Comptroller General Arn van Iersel and by the Executive Financial Officers of the grads' various organizations.

The Financial Management Certificate Program is sponsored by the Office of the Comptroller General and Learning Services and is for employees presently performing or interested in performing financial management or auditing duties in government.

It is specifically designed for those employees following or planning to follow a program of studies leading to a professional accounting designation granted by the Certified Management Accountants So-

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Comptroller General Arn van Iersel; Gary Collins, Minister of Finance; Jeanne Wilson, Financial Analyst, Kamloops; Cliff Parker, District Services Manager, New Westminster; and Jeff Thom, Information and Privacy Analyst, Victoria

Post-fire challenges in the Thompson-Nicola District

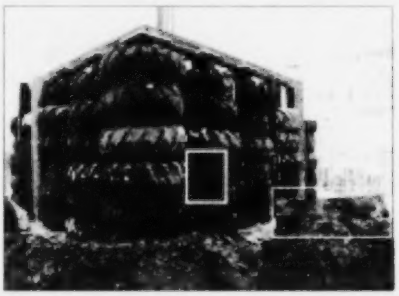
Submitted by Julian Malinsky

Clean-up and repairs after the fires north of Kamloops include emergency repairs to a burnt bridge on Westside Road, partnering with BC Hydro on a $500,000 danger tree removal project, replacement of 15 kilometres of right-of-way fencing and the necessary rock scaling.

The fire burned trees and destroyed significant root systems on three rock slope sites south of Barriere at Fish Trap (120 metres high), Shale Slide and Exlou. David Gerraghty, Senior Rockwork Engineer and John Schindel, Rockwork Project Technician, professionally managed the investigative assessment work, planning and design and restoration projects.

Murrin Construction was the prime contractor on two sites, also receiving assistance from previous Ministry of Transportation employees running their own businesses, such as Apex Int. (Ron Taylor), Walden Project Services (Ole Walden), and Shyia Rock Work (Jim Guinn and Neal Denis).

Work at the Shale Slide has been ongoing since September. This project was complicated by the proximity of Highway 5N and the CN Rail and the presence of a 135,000-kilovolt transmission line and distribution line below the rock slope.



The photo on the left shows an emergency stabilization project at Shale Slide on Highway 5. The area circled in red is the initial impact location of a scaled boulder. The white-outlined area shows where the rock impacted the berm. And the yellow outline indicates the final location of a two-cubic-metre scaled boulder.

The photo on the right is a wider view of the Shale Slide area where special delineators are being used.

During rock scaling, a rock half a cubic metre in size narrowly missed one of the large three-pole structures on the BC Hydro transmission line, which would have left approximately 10,000 services without power.

Special delineator structures were designed by Dave Cunliffe, P.Eng in concert with BC Hydro and built to protect two large Hydro structures, which allows for the safer completion of the necessary scaling.

The delineators consist of nine heavy steel pipes that are seven metres long and 60 centimetres in diameter, installed in a "\" formation on the uphill side, with large concrete blocks supporting the bottom side of the Hydro structure.

Three metres of the pipes are buried and the upper parts are sleeved with used Skidder tires. The bottom two tires are filled with pea gravel to help absorb the impact of falling rocks.

Happily, the new delineators passed an impact test of a two-cubic-metre rock, which would have destroyed one of the pole structures and landed on the highway. Scaling was halted in December and will be completed after spring thaw.

John Schindel was successful in working with the many stakeholders, namely BC Hydro, CNR, R&B Contractor, contractors, consultants, tree fallers and ministry district and regional staff, ensuring that the projects were completed in a most professional, effective and efficient manner.

The Thompson-Nicola District extends a special thanks to John Schindel, David Gerraghty and their contractors for a job well done!

FMCP: 235 have received certificates

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ciety (CMA) or the Certified General Accountants Association (CGA). The program requires participants to complete nine professionally recognized accounting courses plus six other government courses.

Employees take the non-government courses on their own time and complete the program in three to seven years. Since the program's inception, 235 employees have received their certificates and a high percentage has gone on to complete additional requirements and earn their designation as Certified General Accountants (CGA) or Certified Management Accountants (CMA).

For more information, check the web site at http://www.bcpublicservice.ca/learning/pdf/FMCP_brochure.pdf.

Doug Kirk retires after 34 years

On November 28, 2003, Doug Kirk retired from the Ministry of Transportation after 34 years of service.

Doug started with the ministry on April 10, 1970 in the Williams Lake District as an Engineering Aide. Over the course of the next seven years, he worked in almost every corner of the district including Bella Coola, Likely, Horsefly, Alexis Creek, Dog Creek and Anahim Lake. The exposure to the world of field survey, design, construction and maintenance was terrific experience and varied from location to location.

In May of 1977, he was successful at a competition for the position of District Technician in Prince Rupert and he and his wife, Millie, and young son, Wayne, relocated in June of that year. The exposure in the Prince Rupert District was tremendous and often included dealing with the aftermath of sever coastal rain storms that brought about large scale repairs to roads and bridges as a result of wash outs.

Transportation around the district was common by airplane and helicopter reaching locations on the Queen Charlotte Islands, Stewart and Meziadin. There were often discussions between the District Highways Manager and Doug about who was going to fly to the Charlottes during unpredictable weather events.

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At Argo's yard in Kamloops, the delegation joins (from centre to right) Julian Malinsky, District Business Manager, Tom Bone, Argo General Manager, Mehran Avini, P.Eng. representing ND Lea, and Harvey Nelson, Operations Manager.

Chinese delegation visits B.C. to learn about road maintenance

Submitted by Julian Malinsky

The Thompson-Nicola District was asked to host a Chinese delegation on Nov 26 & 27, 2003, by TTA (Technology Training Associates Ltd.), a subsidiary of BCIT. They wanted to learn about low-volume road maintenance practices in BC's Interior.

The Chinese delegation consisted of 17 executive/engineering types from western China who worked for the Ministry of Communication (responsible for roads) and represented 11 of the 31 provinces.

Argo Road Maintenance (Thompson) Ltd gave the delegation a tour of their new Kamloops facility and equipment and graciously provided us their boardroom.

The visit included a half-day presentation on our road and bridge maintenance procedures. The next day included a visit to the Kamloops weigh scales and a field trip north of Kamloops. The delegation rode on the reaction ferry at McLure, viewed the Barriere burn area and witnessed remedial rock scaling south of Exlou.

Jeff Du, TTA Training Manager, was very pleased with the visit and our exchange of information.

Transportation & roads in China:

- Annual transportation budget of $50 billion.
- Car ownership is growing at 20% per year (60% in Beijing last year).
- 25,000 km of "toll" freeways are being built per year.
- One of the cities represented by the delegation has 32 million people.
- Mongolia is 1,600 km wide and 2,400 km long.
- Two provinces alone have 120,000 and 160,000 km of roads.
- 90% of roads are low-volume, mostly dirt roads with no embankment or ditches.
- Major road damage is attributed to a lack of weigh scales and poor load enforcement.

A career of constant change

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Doug receiving his long service award from Lieutenant Governor Iona Campagnolo and former Minister Judith Reid

However, remaining static was not in Doug's nature, and in 1980 he won the position of District Highways Manager in Dease Lake. On April 1, 1981, Doug, Millie, Wayne and newly born Morgan were all heading up Highway 37 to make residency in the small community of Dease Lake. It is here that Doug and his family were exposed to the huge expanses of the northern part of the province steeped in history of the early Gold rush days that came about in locations such as Bob Quinn, Tattoga and Good Hope lakes, Atlin, Telegraph Creek, Watson Lake and Whitehorse. It was also the first time the bite of temperatures sinking to -52 C was experienced, along with the most wonderful displays of Northern Lights.

In June of 1984, Doug was transferred to the Robson Valley and worked out of the McBride District office for the next five years. Challenges still abounded and ranged from major floods and earth slides that closed highways 16 and 5 on numerous occasions to the privatization of the highway maintenance sector in 1988.

In 1989, Doug and family relocated to Merritt where he became District Highways Manager, taking on the Coquihalla Highway expansion, significant rehabilitation programs for roads and bridges, and overseeing maintenance contractors and contract renewals in the Merritt area.

A few words from Doug Kirk to the ministry on his retirement

I could not possibly think of a better provincial government ministry to work for. A ministry that would not only test one's ability to deal with extenuating circumstances but that would make a tremendous effort to have people properly trained, allow them the opportunity to develop, to be creative and advance in their careers. The Ministry of Transportation has and continues to be a leading ministry in government and maintains its long-standing reputation of being a "can do" ministry.

The challenges put forward to ministry employees over the past 34 years have been met head on and always with success in providing for the highway user and the public overall. These challenges have varied from dealing with extreme weather events to building significant pieces of infrastructure and being the assisting hand in significant areas of developments around the highway network, throughout the province.

I am extremely proud to say that I have had the opportunity to work with many talented and capable individuals within the Ministry of Transportation throughout my career. The challenges of the future are going to be significant. Our organization has been reduced in size, which means that managing how the work will be done will be in the forefront of day-to-day business. The people within the Ministry of Transportation, I am confident, will rise to the occasion now as they have in the past.

To all of my peers, associates and friends I must say one last thank you for your guidance, patience, advice and most of all your friendship. I am not certain as to what the future may bring, but I am confident that our paths will cross again.

All the best,
D.S. Kirk (Retired)

Kudos for good teamwork

Big kudos to supervisor Bob Wilson, Mike Cormie and Dan Johnson of the Kootenay electrical crew for quickly installing a streetlight for the Marysville School crosswalk on Highway 95A in November 2003. The project was cost-shared with the City of Kimberley. The parents, school board and crossing guard requested the light to increase safety for students using the crosswalk, particularly during the darker winter months.

Gregg Singer, Deborah Miller and Bob Buckingham show off the Long Service Awards they received at an October 2003 ceremony featuring former Minister of Transportation Judith Reid and Lieutenant Governor Iona Campagnolo.

Ministry Long Service Awards for 2002 & 2003

The Long Service Awards provide the opportunity to recognize employees for their dedication and commitment to the Province of British Columbia.

Employees with 25, 35 and 40 years of service were honoured on Oct. 22, 2003 in Victoria with an awards ceremony, buffet dinner and dance at beautiful Government House.

Former Minister of Transportation Judith Reid and Lieutenant-Governor Iona Campagnolo attended to offer their best wishes.

Eighty-nine Ministry of Transportation staff received their 25-year award and 11 received their 35-year long service awards. A proud accomplishment!

"Dease 70 . . . Clear"

Submitted by Leona Constantineau

A farewell dinner was held October 18, 2003 in Dease Lake for retiring road maintenance crewmember John "Mumbles" McPhee.

John "Mumbles" McPhee

Here's an excerpt from Rob McPhee's tribute to his dad:

"Back in the '60s, when driving the Telegraph Road was an adventure, Father McAllister, the priest from Cassiar, who always spent more time talking to his passengers than concentrating on his driving, would often end up in the ditch.

Consequently, when he was travelling back and forth from Telegraph, he would try to leave a half hour before Dad so that Dad would be able to pull him out and get him back on the road.

Someone once commented, "Father, with all the accidents you have, you must have the Lord riding with you," to which the good Father replied: "Well, yes, I guess I do; but I put more faith in having Johnny McPhee behind me.

"Dad started work as an auxiliary with the Ministry of Highways in Telegraph Creek in 1956. He has operated everything from Cats, dump trucks, low-beds, loaders and even the old pole graders.

"When Highways established a permanent maintenance camp at Dease Lake in 1965, Dad was one of the original crewmembers, mainly working as the cat skinner. He switched over to the grader about 1980. Dad continued

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Marilyn Mattson retires

Submitted by Linda Malo

Marilyn Mattson has retired after 14 years of public service. Her career started in Terrace as the Regional Manager, Finance and Administration, followed by terms in Victoria as Acting Director, Management Services for Motor Vehicle Branch.

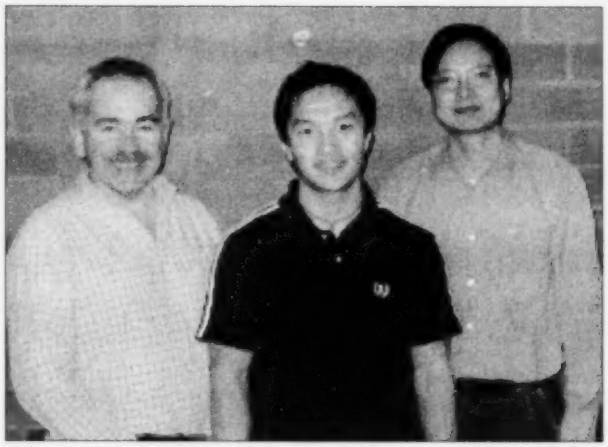
After acting as Regional Manager, Traffic Operations for one year, she won the competition for this position in the South Coast Region in September 1998.

On April 9, 2003, a retirement luncheon was held in Marilyn's honour at the Santorini Taverna in Coquitlam. Attendees included those that she worked with while in the Northern Region. She is now happily retired and living in Nanaimo.

New faces: Northern Region adds a trio to Partnerships

Northern Region is pleased to announce the addition of three key players to the Planning and Partnerships team - one with a wealth of experience, another just beginning his career, and the third a recent transplant from Ontario.

Greg Woollacott takes on the role of Manager, Property Acquisition; Dennis Nguyen will be working toward his professional accreditation as the Transportation Planning Engineer-in-Training; and the latest addition is James Luo, who will serve as the region's new Transportation Planning Engineer.



The Northern Region Planning and Partnerships group has expanded to include (left to right) Greg Woollacott, Manager, Property Acquisition; Dennis Nguyen, Transportation Planning EIT; and, James Luo, Regional Transportation Officer.

A recent transplant from Duke Energy, Greg brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience extending well beyond the realm of property management.

With more than 23 years as a Registered Professional Forester and land use planner with the BC forest industry, government, natural gas industry and First Nations, Greg can offer a high degree of customer service to his regional clients.

Greg acquired his undergraduate degree in forestry and Masters of Science in Planning from UBC. He is currently in the process of becoming a Member of the Canadian Institute of Planners.

Greg, his wife Joan and teenagers Tyler and Robin are long-time residents of Prince George. An avid outdoorsman, Greg is frequently in search of big game or trophy-size fish.

Dennis Nguyen is the Transportation Planning EIT. Though the parameters of that task will evolve over time, he does know it will entail a lot of learning, but that's OK.

His time here will allow him the luxury of experiencing a few different work assignments before deciding the area he wants to specialize in. Assignments to date have incorporated a lot of reading.

"Much of what I'm dealing with now, I studied in school, but real life application requires a more in-depth look.

Jin (Oh) always tells me that what you learn in school is just the tip of the iceberg. When you get out in the real world, it's not as simple as what was in the text book."

Dennis acquired his degree in environmental engineering from the University of Regina. Having grown up in Saskatchewan, Dennis has found living amongst the trees and mountains of British Columbia to be a bit of an adjustment but a nice change nonetheless. His love of mountain biking will certainly take on a new dimension.

"Finding a nice trail is a lot easier here than in Saskatchewan," he chuckled.

Dennis appears to be adapting nicely to his new surroundings and has no desire to return to the flatlands. So far, it looks like a great start to a promising career!

Now if only Dennis can score a teaching position in Prince George for his girlfriend, life will be really good!

And then there's James Luo, who is not only a newcomer to the ministry and to our province but a recent immigrant as well.

Originally from China, James acquired his Civil Engineering Degree from Wuhan University of Hydraulic and Electric Engineering in 1992.

He worked for an engineering consulting company in Nanjing, a city a little bigger than Vancouver, before moving to Canada.

James added a Masters degree in Civil Engineering (specializing in transportation engineering) from the University of Regina in 2002.

From there, he joined J. Foster Engineering Ltd., in Barrie, Ontario, where he worked as a civil/municipal engineer.

The Planning and Partnerships group was able to lure James away to take a position and become a Regional Transportation Officer (Transportation Planning Engineer) beginning in November. Here, James will be working on assignments in transportation planning, land use planning, capital program development and programming as well as business case preparation and engineering economic analyses.

We welcome all our new faces!

Back row: *Brent Bailey, Denise Bollinger, Hugh Eberle, Phil Best, Stephanie Gillis, Duane Neufeld, Peter Muirhead, John Tweedy, Dan Palesch, Bruce Lintott*
Front row: *Paul Heikkila, Chad Tenney, Larry Ballard, Donna Fitzpatrick, Carol Woykin, Audrey Kempin, Fred Hughes, Jacques Dupas, Kim Rowan, Janice McCarthy*

2003 customer service champions

After the more than 1,043 customer surveys were completed by Ministry of Transportation staff and the numbers were crunched, the staff of the West Kootenay District were found to be the 2003 customer service champions. They received a Customer Service Index (CSI) rating of 7.02 out of 10. The CSI is based on responsiveness, effectiveness, accessibility, efficiency and complaint handling.

In recognition of their achievement, staff were given monogrammed polo shirts and will soon be hosting the customer service trophy until the 2004 customer service champions are determined.

McPhee: Serving the North since 1956

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with Highways until privatization. Since then he's worked for the road maintenance contractors, NoRoadCo, YRB, North Peace and Emcon."

John was presented with several miniature replica graders, including a pole grader, along with a new Stetson, grey in colour to match his hair!! We will all miss seeing John grading our roads in Area 28. Best of Luck to you, John.

Dease 70 . . . Clear.

All tied up

Normally a guy who might consider himself lucky to find a lump of coal in his stocking, Provincial Approving Officer (and resident ham) Glyn Briscoe is seen here sporting the new tie Santa brought him (over the old tie, underneath).

Actually, staff in Northern Region grew weary of Mr. Briscoe's "one tie serves every occasion" concept, so a collection was taken to come up with this spiffy little number from the bargain bin!

News from the Peace...

Submitted by Leslie Elder

AND THE YEAR WAS 1953!! The Peace District had four of their staff turn the dreaded 50 this past year! Dwain Hornland, Project Manager in Fort St. John, John Miller, Road Area Manager in Dawson Creek, Stan Beaulieu, District Technician in Dawson Creek and Bruce Craig, District Technician in Fort St. John.

For those of you that have been around since 1993, you may recognize the photo on Bruce's birthday cake! It's hard to believe that 10 years have passed since BCIT was providing training to Development Approvals staff!

For those of you that didn't take advantage of the career development courses at BCIT, you probably didn't know that belly dancing was one of the most popular courses! Another one of those hidden talents of the Development Approvals staff!

Dan Hillman with the District Ghoules

Joanne Chambers from the Peace District was very persuasive when it came to collecting donations from the staff for the annual PECSF campaign.

Bruce's 40th birthday surprise at BCIT in 1993 (above), and the commemorative birthday cake given to him 10 years later for his 50th (right)

Thanks to Joanne, our staff donated a total of $630.50. For those that made a donation, their name was put into a regional draw for an assortment of gifts. Bruce Craig was the winner of a $125 gift certificate. Congratulations Bruce! Joanne also implemented a 50/50 draw that collected $179, with half going to the United Way, and the winner of the other $89.50 was Dale Hillman. Yes, the Dale Hillman who used to work for Ministry of Transportation and left us six years ago to work with Duke Energy.

Thanks to all the staff that made generous donations to very worthy organizations. And thanks to Joanne for all her hard work!

At the beginning of 2003, the Peace District welcomed newcomers Dave Duncan and Neil Wood, as well as Jim Guthrie who returned to us after an extended holiday with Forestry. In the later part of 2003, we welcomed some more newcomers to the district. Doug Rennie and Sacha Antifaeff joined us as the new District Operations Technicians. They will have a busy year ahead with both North and South Peace maintenance contracts coming up for renewal in 2004 and of course the RIMS project.

Dave Duncan & Buddy

Bill Becker joined us in December as the new Bridge Area Manager in Dawson Creek, replacing Larry Ballard who moved to Grand Forks in June 2003.

Nicole Ramsey left the "sunny" Okanagan behind her and moved to the "sunny" Peace to fill our vacant clerk position. Although Nicole hasn't got used to the northern way of life yet, she has settled into the office and has become a welcome addition.

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Bonnie Whipple received a monogrammed vest from Mike Proudfoot in recognition for going the extra mile in customer service. But it doesn't end there. Mike also handed Bonnie the keys to his office, making her Acting District Highways Manager for Vancouver Island as Mike leaves to be Executive Director for the Gateway Project. Much success to both of you!

HR branch mentorship web site is now on-line

The Human Resources Branch has put together a web site on mentorship, online at http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/gwwmentor/.

The site provides a resource for information on mentorship, including an overview of roles and responsibilities of mentors and protégé, how to build an effective mentoring relationship and find a mentor, as well as links to other resources on mentorship.

Take a look!

Conference highlights global connections

Submitted by Sharlie Huffman, Bridge Seismic Engineer

The sun was shining, a light breeze blowing and Athens' famed air pollution not in evidence. Still, 500 engineers from 47 countries sat inside one of the three theatres at the Megaron Concert Hall giving close attention to the speakers. This was the prestigious International Federation for Structural Concrete (fib) Symposium on "Concrete Structures in Seismic Regions" and featured engineering and scientific experts from around the world.

Forty-three papers from Asia/Pacific Rim, 125 from Europe and 39 from the Americas showed how much the state-of-the-art in the field of structural concrete has improved over the last couple of decades and indicated the way of necessary improvements to our codes. The fib has long offered the message that "engineering associations are the best forerunners of regional and global co-operation." The truly global representation of the participation at this symposium supports that message. I was very honoured to be presenting a paper in this company.

Working with ISIS (Intelligent Sensing for Innovative Structures), a national research organization based in Winnipeg, the ministry used new synthetic material to seismically strengthen the Portage Bridge and instrumented it with strain gauges and accelerometers. My paper, jointly written with ISIS, was on the topic of this instrumentation. For those who would like more information, the full paper will shortly be on the Bridge Engineering web site and the instrumentation at Portage Bridge can be viewed at the ISIS site, http://130.179.57.204/ActiveSHM/PCmainpages/PCL.htm.

My presentation was on the last day, by which time I

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News from the Peace: A busy time for Dave Duncan

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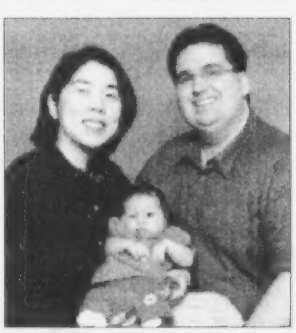
A year has come and gone since Dave Duncan joined the Peace District, and believe it or not, we have survived!

It has been a very busy year and one filled with lots of change, not only within our district but throughout our ministry. For those of you that know Dave, you will understand that it can be challenging to sit Dave down and have a serious conversation. He is well known for his paperclip art and the pens around the office all seem to end up broken!

Although the life of a District Manager takes them out of the District a lot, Dave did manage to visit a large part of the Peace in the past year. I was actually able to get him out of the office for a few days in August so he could visit the far reaches of the Peace District. We visited the "Terminus of the Rocky Mountains" at Muncho Lake, where Dave made friends with "Buddy."

Dave and his wife Julia have settled into Fort St. John and actually seem to enjoy life in the north. They also welcomed their first daughter, Emily, on November 29.



Dave, Julia & Emily

(left to right) Stepfather Albert Lee, mother Ethel Lee, Lawren, wife Carol Ann, John Dyble, mother-in-law Nellie Wilhelmsen (hidden) Gebre Libsekal friend and former MoT employee, Bea Libsekal.

Lawren Wagar Retires

Submitted by Dianne Friend

On Oct. 21, 2003, a retirement luncheon was held at the Eagle Creek Golf Club in Burnaby to honour Lawren Wagar, Regional Manager, Engineer, South Coast Region. A fitting location for this avid golfer!

Lawren received many accolades for his many contributions to the ministry during the course of his more than 31 years of exemplary service. Family, friends, co-workers and former co-workers came from as far away as Terrace for the occasion. Many congratulatory letters from those that were unable to attend and a little roasting was done to the delight of all the attendees.

Lawren, like many other Ministry of Transportation employees, has worked throughout the province. He started in the summer of 1971 as a summer student with Bridge Branch. In June 1972, he joined the ministry as an engineer-in-training, working in Kamloops, Nakusp, Terrace, Quesnel, Revelstoke, Victoria and Prince George. From November 1973 to August 1976, he was the District Highways Manager in Burns Lake. From August 1976 to June 1978, Lawren was in Nelson as the Regional Bridge Engineer and Maintenance Management Engineer.

He then went on to be the Maintenance Programs Engineer in Victoria until November 1988 where he developed the first bridge information system for the province and new coating system standards for steel bridges, as well as taking the lead in developing the maintenance standards for the privatization of road and bridge maintenance in 1988.

Lawren then went north to Prince George as the Regional Manager, Operations until July 1996. Moving back to the south, he was the District Highways Manager for the Lower Mainland District from August 1996 to October 1997, concluding his career as the Regional Manager, Engineering.

We wish Lawren and his wife Carol Ann a healthy and enjoyable retirement and lots of time for golfing.

Outstanding achievement

For outstanding contribution to the Alternative Services Delivery, geotech drilling initiative, Nancy Merston, Project Manager, Alternative Services Delivery recognizes Miles Webster, Regional Manager, Engineering; Maria Braden, Manager, Financial Services; and Bob Corder, Regional Manager, Corporate Services.

Don Ramsay, District Manager, Transportation, Skeena recognizes the Peace, Bulkley Stikine and Fort George Districts for their kind donations to the Skeena District. Steve Uyesugi, District Manager, Transportation, Bulkley-Stikine; Hali Davenport, Acting District Manager, Transportation, Peace; and Danny Morris, Acting District Manager, Transportation, Fort George, graciously accept Certificates of Meritorious Selflessness on behalf of their respective districts.

For outstanding dedication and service during the fires in the Kamloops region in August 2003, Tracy Cooper, Regional Director presents Don Ramsay, District Manager, Transportation, Skeena with a Certificate of Recognition. At an earlier presentation, Grant Lachmuth, District Manager, Fort George was also recognized for his outstanding dedication and service during the fire and flood emergencies in July and August 2003.

Ministry WARS leading the way

Submitted by Al Planiden

Wildlife related motor vehicle collisions are one of the operational legacies of highway development throughout the world.

Living in a province where there are more deer, moose and other critters wandering out onto the road than probably anywhere else on earth, gives drivers in BC more negotiation challenges than a mouse living with two cats.

Fortunately this is an issue has that has not been ignored, thanks in large part to the efforts of Len Sielecki, Environmental Issues Analyst with the Engineering Branch. Len and the ministry's Wildlife Accident Reporting System (WARS) were recently featured in a two-page article in the international publication "World Highways."

The WARS system was initiated in the late '70s by Mike Kent, the ministry's Chief Environmental Officer, and through Len's continued efforts, it has been developed into a state-of-the-art management tool that is the envy of other transportation jurisdictions.

It works like this: Our highway maintenance contractors collect wildlife accident information whenever the remains of an animal is discovered along the highway.

Contractors complete an accident reporting form that provides geographic, temporal and species-specific information.

Completed forms are sent to Ministry of Transportation district offices, where the reports are assembled and verified, and then on to headquarters where the data is entered into the WARS database.

That's when the "analyst" part of Len Sielecki's title comes into play. Len takes the information and dissects and interprets the data in enough ways to produce a hefty annual WARS report. The ministry uses the data and report recommendations to identify problem locations and things such as wildlife habits next to highways.

Len Sielecki next to a deer jump in Belgium

This information allows the ministry to consider wildlife accident mitigation measures such as warning signs, exclusion fencing, reflector installation and wildlife crossing structures.

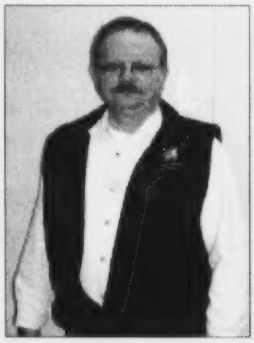
Liaisons have been established with ICBC, and the ministry has successfully cost-shared with them in providing needed improvements to address wildlife issues along highways. When you consider that between 1997 and 2002, the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia paid almost $120 million in wildlife-related motor vehicle accident claims and our maintenance contractors have spent over $6 million dollars on related accident cleanup since 1993, money used for mitigation efforts is money well spent.

In November of 2003, Len was also invited to speak on the ministry's wildlife accident reduction initiatives at the Infra Eco Europe Network (IENE) conference in Brussels, Belgium. Over 180 highway engineers, planners, administrators and ecologists from 29 countries attended, and his presentation was very well received.

In Europe and the United States, transportation officials are viewing WARS as the model to follow in developing their own programs.

Way to go, Lorne!

Lorne Bonderoff, Project Supervisor, Design in Nelson (Southern Interior Region), received a vest and framed award earlier this year in recognition of his outstanding customer service.



Portage Bridge work takes ministry employee to Athens

(Continued from page 12)

was a bundle of nerves. The quality of the presentations I had attended was very high and I was following Peter Taylor, of Buckland and Taylor. As I gave my talk to a huge audience, in spite of my fears, I didn't spot anyone falling asleep, some well-directed questions were asked and I was approached afterward and complimented on the presentation. What a relief, but I still think I would prefer to be at the front of the program.

Retirement Celebrations in Victoria & Kamloops

Victoria

Honouring Bill Bedford

12 p.m.
March 11, 2004
Kiplings Restaurant
Empress Hotel

Tickets $23 each
Includes buffet, dessert & non-alcoholic beverage

Sherry Barnes
(250) 387-8597

Elaine Galbraith
(250) 356-6225

Kamloops

A farewell to:

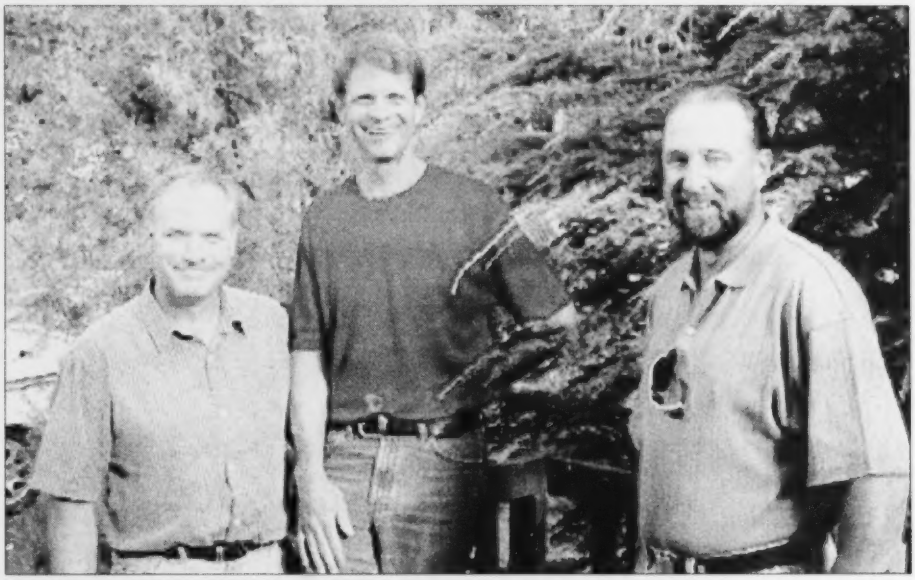
Jon Buckle
Rod Schoof
Barrie LeBlond
Jim Jones
Paul Pruden
Pete Puhallo
Virginia Currie
Roger Reimche

7 p.m., March 26, 2004
Campus Activity Centre
UCC

Tickets $30 each
in advance

Crystal Chenier
(250) 828-4284

Lois Park
(250) 828-4277



Larry Brown, Glenn Olleck and Harvey Nelson

New faces for the Southern Interior Region Regional Management Team

Larry Brown, Bridge Area Manager in Nelson, won the Operations Manager position in Cranbrook. Harvey Nelson, Bridge Area Manager in Kamloops, won the Operations Manager position in Kamloops. Glenn Olleck, Roads Area Manager in Revelstoke, won the Operations Manager position in Revelstoke. These three are the new additions to the Southern Interior Regional Management Team. This is just the beginning of new faces the SIRMT. Congratulations to each of you for another great achievement with the ministry. Best of luck in your new positions.

Just clownin' around

Looks like some of the folks in the Bulkley Stikine District (Smithers Office) really got into Halloween. Pictured here are Sherrie Applegate, Development Approvals - Office Clown; Leona Constantineau, District Services Manager - Flower Child; and Mark Savage, Project Tech - Mud Runner.